

Paul's story begins in Rwanda, the country of his birth. Nearly three decades ago, he was serving as assistant general manager of a luxury hotel in Kigali, Rwanda, when the Rwandan genocide began.

The genocide, which led to the deaths of an estimated 800,000 people over a 3-month period, targeted mostly members of the ethnic Tutsi minority. Paul is a member of the Hutu majority, but he was determined not to see his Tutsi countrymen die on his watch.

As genocidal killing squads roamed through Rwanda, Paul sheltered more than 1,200 people in his hotel, saving their lives.

In the aftermath of the genocide, Paul and his family received asylum in Belgium and later moved to San Antonio with the help of the late Texas Senator Bob Krueger, an international leader in the fight against genocide. In 2005, President George W. Bush presented Paul with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, our Nation's highest civilian honor.

Since the 1994 genocide, the Government of Rwanda has made tremendous strides in economic development and stability. However, the country's government is still plagued by corruption, abuse of power, and human rights issues that amount to violations of international law—including enforced disappearances.

At home and abroad Paul Rusesabagina has used his voice and elevated platform to call attention to the need for change in Rwanda. In response, the Rwandan Government launched an extraordinary campaign of persecution against him.

In August 2020, Paul was extrajudicially transferred from Texas to Rwanda by way of the United Arab Emirates and arrested on trumped-up charges.

The Rwandan Government did not acknowledge his detention for 3 days, during which he was reportedly subject to torture. In September 2021, Paul was found guilty and sentenced in a trial that the European Union described as "marred by numerous violations of his fair trial rights."

He is a cancer survivor who lives with serious cardiovascular issues, and Rwandan authorities have not provided him with the care he needs in prison.

I have my children here on the floor with me, and my heart breaks for Paul's family who can only speak to him once a week for 5 minutes. It is long past time for Rwanda to release Paul and allow him to come home to San Antonio.

My colleagues and I on both sides of the aisle have raised our concerns previously. In December 2020, we sent a bipartisan, bicameral letter to Rwandan President Paul Kagame urging him to release Paul on humanitarian grounds. We spoke out about the way Paul was taken against his will to Rwanda, which for all intents and purposes was a kidnapping by the Kagame regime.

In June 2021, my colleagues and I wrote to Secretary of State Antony

Blinken urging him to use all diplomatic means at his disposal to ensure Paul's safe return to the United States.

We are not the only ones who are concerned.

Last year, the American Bar Association Center for Human Rights issued a report that found Paul's right to confidential communication, his right to the presumption of innocence, and his right to prepare his defense have all been violated.

In October 2021, the European Parliament adopted a resolution denouncing Paul's illegal arrest. The resolution strongly condemns the conviction, which it said was "exemplary of the human rights violations in Rwanda."

Paul is a permanent resident of the United States, and we must work just as hard as our European allies to bring him home.

In May, the State Department announced its determination that Paul was "wrongfully detained," noting that "The determination took into account the totality of the circumstances, notably the lack of fair trial guarantees during his trial."

I appreciate the support of the State Department, which has been working with Paul's family and the Congress on this issue. I am especially pleased that Paul's case is now under the purview of the Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs, Ambassador Roger Carstens.

Rwanda's President Kagame wants to be seen as a global leader and a reliable partner to the United States, including on issues including climate change. But Paul's unlawful detention is a blight on Rwanda's international reputation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues, both Republican and Democrat, to support this resolution.

Mrs. KIM of California. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution offered by Representative CASTRO and myself. I want to recognize Paul's family, especially his wife and children, who have tirelessly advocated for his release.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. MANNING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time for the purpose of closing.

Mr. Speaker, Paul Rusesabagina's history and circumstances as a war hero wrongfully detained and denied adequate medical care is one that we cannot ignore. Congress must stand with Paul Rusesabagina's family who have not wavered in championing his legacy and calling attention to his plight to call for his immediate release and return to the United States on humanitarian grounds.

Mr. Speaker, I, again, thank Chairman CASTRO for his leadership on this resolution. I urge all my colleagues to join us by voting in the affirmative, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 892, a reso-

lution calling on the Government of the Republic of Rwanda to release Paul Rusesabagina on humanitarian grounds.

The Rwandan genocide is considered one of the deadliest and most brutal tragedies in the history of humankind. In just 100 days, more than 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were systematically assaulted, raped, and slaughtered by the Rwandan and Interahamwe militias. And except for a few peacekeeping forces, the international community at large refused to get involved—leaving any resistance efforts to come from within the country.

That's when Paul Rusesabagina stepped in. As the manager at a hotel in the capital city of Kigali at the time, he was credited for housing and feeding more than 1,200 Tutsi and Hutu refugees during the genocide. He knew that the consequences of his efforts would put both himself and his family in danger, but he still chose to help his people in their greatest hour of need.

Now, the Rwandan government has convicted, detained, and reportedly tortured Mr. Rusesabagina on charges stemming from a trial that the State Department and American Bar Association considered unfair and irreparable. He has also been denied the medical attention required as a cancer survivor and individual suffering from a cardiovascular disorder.

By passing this resolution, the House of Representatives will join several other international democratic bodies to express concern over his conviction and call for his immediate release. We will also urge the United States Government to continue to raise awareness about Mr. Rusesabagina's case and convey our support to his friends, family, and loved ones.

Mr. Speaker, Paul Rusesabagina's story reminds us that hope can be found even during our darkest days. I would urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. MANNING) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 892, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. CLOUD. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 52 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.